

**North Dakota Department of Health  
Mycobacteria Collection and Handling**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Collection</b> <i>Do not use fixatives or preservatives.</i>	<b>Volume</b>	<b>*Container/Transport</b> <i>Use sterile, leak-proof containers. Never mail cultures in petri dishes or specimens in urine cups.</i>
<b>Body Fluids</b>	Disinfect site with alcohol if collecting with syringe.	Abdominal 10 - 15ml  Pericardial, Synovial 3 - 5ml  CSF 2ml	Refrigerate at 2 to 8°C
<b>Blood and Bone Marrow</b>	Disinfect site as for routine blood culture.	5 - 10ml	SPS (yellow top) is preferred. Sodium heparin may be used. No EDTA or other preservatives. Keep at room temperature.
<b>Bronchial Wash</b>	Avoid contaminating bronchoscope with tap water.	5 - 7ml	Refrigerate at 2 to 8°C
<b>Gastric</b>	Collect a fasting early-morning specimen. Use sterile saline. If specimen transport is delayed >4hours from collection, add 100mg sodium carbonate or 4% NaOH immediately to neutralize the pH.	5 - 10ml	Refrigerate at 2 to 8°C
<b>Sputum</b>	Aseptically collect three to six specimens on consecutive days. For best results collect early in the morning. Collect the material that is brought up after a deep, productive cough. <b>Specimens collected on the same day will be considered the same and only one processed.</b>	5 - 10ml  <b>Do not pool specimens</b>	Ship specimens within 24 hours. Do not wait and send consecutively collected specimens together. Refrigerate at 2 to 8°C
<b>Stool</b>	Collect without contaminating with urine.		Refrigerate at 2 to 8°C
<b>Swab</b>	Not an acceptable specimen. The hydrophobic nature of the mycobacteria cell wall inhibits transfer of the organism from the swab to the aqueous media.		If only specimen available, add sufficient sterile saline to keep moist and send in sterile, leak proof container. Refrigerate at 2-8°C
<b>Tissue</b>	Aseptically collect in sterile container without fixatives or preservatives. Add only enough sterile saline to prevent drying. Do not wrap in gauze or send on swab.	1gram	Refrigerate at 2 to 8°C
<b>Urine</b>	First morning void collected on three consecutive days. Either clean-catch or catheterization. Do not pool specimens or obtain from catheter bag.	40 ml	Refrigerate at 2 to 8°C

**\*See appendix A for packing and labeling instructions.**